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Best feet forward for horrors and holies!

This issue's front cover shows some of the 75 people at St Giles' Cripplegate in the Barbican, London, on the fourth Toc H London walk which raised over £2,000 for charities including the Meningitis Trust, The Childrens' Society, Victim Support, and the Richard House Hospice. Projects which are part of Toc H's own Families Under Pressure scheme have also benefited. The walk, in September, followed a six-mile 'Horrors, Holies and Hawkubites' route beginning and ending at the Museum of London. At any point walkers might in Queen Anne's day have been set upon by muggers known as Hawkubites; they visited churches; and they saw many ghoulish spots.

A house with a sense of purpose

A group of ordinands from the Anglican and Methodist churches who visited Talbot House in Poperinge, Belgium, were struck by its unique character, reports Ken Prideaux-Brune.

Matthew Tregenza, one of the group, said: "Talbot House has been lovingly preserved but I did not feel it was merely a museum – I was struck by the way in which the house has a sense of purpose that is very relevant today and yet it still retains something of the spirit of its founder. It's a very welcoming place."

The visit was sponsored by the Toc H and All Hallows Trust to enable young ordinands to experience something of the values of Toc H. The group visited places with a commitment to peace and reconciliation, and heard from a Belgian colonel who had been a UN peacekeeper in Bosnia, and an American clergyman, a former naval chaplain who took part in the Gulf War.



Mukesh Varia, Toc H's Database Officer, is seen at the Pool of Peace during a trip to Talbot House in July. He is with Carol Parker, left, and her mother Muriel



Chernobyl children and their leader, with the Lindridge mascot goat at Lindridge House

Holiday happiness for Chernobyl children

For the first time in their lives, a group of youngsters from Chernobyl were able to see and touch flowers and trees free of contamination when they visited Lindridge House, the Toc H base near the coast at Kingsteington in Devon.

The group of youngsters and their leader came to the UK with the Chernobyl Childrens Lifeline charity's Teignbridge Link branch this summer. The 11 children spent a week at Lindridge, enjoying swimming and a barbecue, and had a visit to the dentist. On their last night they had a roast turkey dinner donated by a local farmer.

Next year the Lifeline group hopes to bring 167 children from Belarus to help their health. The Teignbridge Link branch is trying to raise enough money to pay for the visit.

A second group, children aged between 9 and 15, visited Lindridge from the Sutton Coldfield Lone Parents Group. They practised orienteering on nearby Dartmoor, meeting Dartmoor ponies and exploring marsh ponds and tried rock-climbing.

Movement with a positive future

Director Geoffrey Smith believes Toc H has made considerable progress in the past two years, developing from an organisation quietly dying to a movement with a positive future. He writes from the interim National Management Committee:

Following each Central Executive Committee I have normally prepared a Director's briefing to inform Councillors of what had happened at the meeting.

With the new Governance arrangements it seems sensible to extend this to all members.

The Interim National Management Committee met last month and addressed issues arising from the new Governance arrangements and Branch Regulations, considered the Director's Report, the 2002/3 Business Plan, and looked at the way forward for Talbot Centres.



It must be noted that the structure we now have is not the one that was proposed to Council in November 2001. In June 2002

Council voted itself out of existence in favour of a directly elected National Management Committee. To participate in these elections members have to be members individually of Toc H National.

Individual members can then form themselves into Branches which will have a direct relationship with the Centre. This relationship has to be set out and agreed in language which is clear and understandable. This is where the regulations come in.

Earlier this year, John Mitchell, either on his own or with a CEC member, took the draft regulations to a number of branches, who accepted the need for Toc H branches to operate within a regulatory framework acceptable to the Charity Commission. Branches are beginning to sign and return the regulations to Wendover.

With the new structure the NMC will become more concerned with setting the broad policy framework for the movement with detailed day-to-day running of the

charity delegated to staff. The Business Plan becomes a key management tool.

To reiterate what I said in my report to the CEC: 'We have made considerable progress in the past two years, from a dying organisation to a movement with a positive future. The indicators of this are:

- In the past two-and-a-half years the contacts on the database have increased from 5000 to 7500
- We have introduced a modern form of Governance
- We have improved working practices
- We have improved our committee structure with fewer committees working more efficiently within a business plan which is regularly monitored
- We have an ambitious and achievable development programme
- We are attracting more volunteers into more projects
- We have appointed ten new staff
- Membership giving has increased by 138%
- We have a balanced budget
- We have restructured our finances to achieve a sustainable income position
- We have identified/realised assets to the value of nearly £7.5million which could make us financially self-sustaining
- We have a sustainable investment policy with a balanced portfolio including cash, equities, shares, hedge funds and property

A major concern for the NMC is ensuring that our property is managed and becomes a net contributor to Toc H income. A key appointment to the staff team, Francis Braganza, has begun to formulate a strategy to implement Council's decision to proceed with Talbot Centres and the NMC agreed to establish a new company to take this exciting concept forward, providing a vehicle for future development building clearly on Toc H values.

Geoffrey Smith

News in brief

Can you help?

Toc H Zimbabwe is trying to raise funds to help people who care for orphaned children with Aids, the old and the sick. The money will be used to give training in desperately-needed skills such as growing nutritional food, candle-making and sewing.

Contributions should be sent to:

TOC H Zimbabwe,
Acc No. 4209800,
Sort Code 2322
Barclays Bank,
Main Street,
Bulawayo

Cathedral services

A Service of Light is to be held by Toc H at Liverpool Cathedral on Monday 11th November. It will begin with a minute's silence at 11am and include music and dance. Toc H will also be holding services at cathedrals in Dunblane, Norwich, Truro and Wakefield.

And a special date for your diary . . .

A national conference and service of re-dedication on Toc H's 90th birthday is set to be held in Coventry Cathedral in June 2005.

Annual Meeting

The AGM will be held at Swanwick, in Derbyshire, on Saturday 2nd November. A full set of the accounts and business plan are available from Central Services.

Welcome to new members

Judy Duffy	Orston
Steve Smith	Lea Valley
H D Hallett	Saltford
Charlotte Rennie	Crewe
Stuart Alan Wroe	Mid-Eastern Region
Pennie Kennedy	SE Region
Neil Tinsley	SCANS

Raising the roof

Rickmansworth campsite has received a £10,000 award from the Zurich Advice Network Foundation.

Warden Roger Cattermoul said: "I'm absolutely delighted. We'll be spending the money on replacing the pavilion roof and starting work on toilets for the disabled."

The funding comes from the Theme 2002/3 (Kids 2 Care 4).

'We put smiles on the f

Californian volunteer Mike Arnerich, 23, was inspired by his spell working with a group of people with disabilities on the 'Diana' on the Kennet & Avon Canal this summer.



Mike took part in the canal boat project through the International Volunteer Program which Toc H helps facilitate.



Mike spent a week travelling up and down the canal with members of Swindon self-help group. It was a 'delightful' experience and took the

"We worked well together and that was the key. We took part and helped out where help was needed. We shared stories and we enjoyed it. Importantly we put smiles on faces."

"I personally enjoyed talking with a man who has had cancer for the past five years. He told me that he was



faces that needed them'



nd down a stretch of the canal taking
ups for outings. He describes it as a
e enchanting pictures on these pages.

t was important. Everyone did their own
as needed. We cooked and cleaned
e laughed together. But most
s that needed them most."

an older man who has been living with
taught me to go after my dreams and to

live life to the fullest. He taught me to never give up even when I
think that I have had enough. I took his words to heart, because
this was a man who had been told by doctors that he had only six
months to live."

Mike, from Santa Rosa, adds: "I recommend this Toc H project to
anyone who feels like making a difference for the better. If I could
somehow save up enough money and make my way back to
beautiful England one day, I will try my best to get my name on the
volunteer list again. Thanks!"



Long-standing member of Toc H, the Rev Neville Pearce, in conversation with John Mitchell in 'Telling Your Tale No 3'

Neville doesn't talk like a lawyer, and doesn't much look like one! Perhaps that is because he never really wanted to be one. He only did so because of family pressure, and it was to be 40 years before he finally realised his teenage dream – to serve God in fulltime Christian ministry.

He achieved two law degrees at Leeds University, and after serving articles with the Town Clerk of Wakefield, qualified as a solicitor in 1955. After National Service, he started on a career in local government. Following spells in Darlington, Grimsby and Blackpool, he was Town Clerk in Bath, and then had 16 years with Avon County Council, the last seven as Chief Executive.

Neville took early retirement in his mid '50s, and was soon persuaded by his then bishop, George Carey, into being the diocesan co-ordinator for the Decade of Evangelism.

Toc H: the practical application of Christianity?

One day he said to Neville 'You would be more use to me ordained,' and so he was, in 1991. 'Initially I rebelled against the idea,' he says, 'but all the way along doors opened for me. It was clearly the Lord's work.'

I was entranced not only by the spirit of Toc H but also by the quality of the relationships....

His early church experience was very formal Anglican. In the family pew 'you stood up at the right times, said the right responses and never ever looked round! It was all very proper.' At University he joined the

Student Christian Movement, partly because the denominational societies seemed very narrow and partly because 'when you go up to University you go to a Freshers' Conference and sign on at a stall – and that is influenced' he says with a grin, 'by which stall has the most attractive girls or the most fluent advocates!' It was perhaps a small act of rebellion against his very formal Anglican upbringing. But he identifies two other formative faith experiences.

When in Guildford, at law school, he realised his increasing boredom with the formality of church attendance. He realised he was going largely from habit. One evening, however, he visited a different church where he was immediately welcomed and invited to a gathering afterwards with no strings attached. Just 'Come and see.' Here, in a young group, he found a warm welcome, coffee and laughter but also the alarming idea of extemporary prayer – so different from the formal liturgy he had known. He was also challenged to really explore his Bible, and 'it suddenly all became real for me. Prayer opened up as a reality, and in those four months the Lord turned my life right round so I was facing the other way.'

Some years later, while working in Darlington, someone else said 'Welcome' and then 'Come and see'. This was a colleague called Peter Cubitt who invited him to his family home for meals, and made him welcome in a new town. Later Peter told him of Toc H and said 'Come and see'. Neville was 'totally hooked'.

Toc H taught me how to relate, and to see ALL the things of daily life as part of the Christian jigsaw

'The branch were such a mixed bunch,' he says, 'professional men, manual workers, the very active and the very retired! All in it together. I was entranced not only by the spirit of what it stood for but also by the

Building a fairer society

Toc H is committed to building a fairer society by working with communities to promote friendship and service, confront prejudice, and practise reconciliation. Toc H is about people. Founded in 1915, Toc H works to break down barriers between people by challenging their prejudices about others and the divisions which exist in society. Its work is based on Christian principles, and people of all faiths, and of none, are welcomed. Toc H works with people from all walks of life, tackling social problems such as loneliness and deprivation, through an approach which emphasises self-help, and encourages people to accept responsibility for themselves and their local community.

Toc H uses the model of the four points of the compass to offer four personal challenges which are the inspiration for its members. The four points are:

1. Friendship – to love widely and to welcome all in friendship
2. Service – to build bravely and give personal service

3. Fairmindedness – to think fairly, always listening to the views of others and finding one's own convictions
4. The Kingdom of God – to witness humbly, acknowledging the spiritual nature of man, practising the Christian way of life, and helping the truth to prevail

'Point 3', the magazine of Toc H, takes its name from the third point of the compass, Fairmindedness. It seeks to inform, encourage, and stimulate.

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The opinions expressed in this issue are not necessarily those of Toc H, and the Editor reserves the right to cut articles and letters. Members receive a free copy but contributions are welcome.

Next deadline for Point 3 15th November 2002

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OBITUARIES

NOTTINGHAM BRANCH

On November 1st, All Saints Day, at 11.30 am, we are holding a Special Service at St. Mary's, High Pavement, Nottingham. We are compiling a list of people we would like to remember on that occasion, and at 12 o'clock, we shall light the TOC H lamp. If you would like us to put anyone on the list just let us know. Afterwards we shall sharing a meal together, please bring your own food. For more information, contact David Monkton, 17 Villiers Road, Woodthorpe, Nottingham, NG5 4FB.

Email: david@prayer12.org.uk

In July

Winifred May Taylor

North West and North Wales Region

Grace Millergill

Broughton Astley, M.E Region

Norman Chapman

Burraton

Irena Stanley Crocker

Leominster

Neville S. Jacklin

M.E Region

In August

Brian Richard Medland

Taunton S.W

John Henry Sweet

Looe Branch

Mahala Rhoda Scoble

Burraton

Edith Mary Hammond

Melton Mowbray

Dennis Fielding

Sheaf Branch

Rev John William Larte

Sally Whitcombe

Huddersfield



First class help for school

Happy faces of the pupils at Dragodovana

Toc H volunteers have already signed up in force to help rebuilding work at a school in Bulgaria. Derek Ridgeway of Walsall Branch and Anne Puddicombe of West Peninine will lead the taskforce to the Dragodovana School, near Silven, which nestles at the bottom of a mountain. Silven is four hours by road from Sophia.

The trip is already well subscribed, but now Derek is looking for funds. He can be contacted at Wendover Central Services.

The main task for the working group is to demolish a dividing wall and restore the school gymnasium to use. As the picture below shows the school has become very rundown, and there will be other tasks nearer the time. The group will have the chance to mix with the local Christian community and to participate in their services.



The rundown state of the Dragodovana School



Happy campers...



Somali children and their parents enjoyed the outdoor life at the Talbot Centre campsite near Rickmansworth in the summer

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quality of the relationships between the members. It was an insight into the naturalness of relationships between men, whatever their background. And that was in contrast to the respectable Anglicans I had grown up with.

'These people did not put up barriers to protect their status – they were willing to be open and vulnerable. I recognised that their Christianity pervaded their whole lives and I thought - THIS is what it is all about. In a way, Toc H enables you to grasp the essential simplicity of the Christian faith as it can and should be lived.'

Neville was an active member before he moved to Bath, at District and Area level. He was also a Central Councillor. Work demands when he moved to Bath prevented him being actively involved, but he kept up membership and now enthusiastically supports Lindridge House.

I asked how Toc H had affected his work. He felt Toc H insights had had a real influence on him. The Toc H commitment to 'think fairly' and to listen to 'Everyman's story' permeated all his relationships. It was an attitude to people irrespective of their origins or place in the social pecking order. 'Toc H taught me how to relate, and to see ALL the things of daily life as part of the Christian jigsaw'. In Blackpool, one member became a particular friend and used to bus miles across the town to help him paint his house. The fact that he was a very lowly worker in the entertainment world and that Neville was a senior official at the Municipal Offices 'just didn't matter. We were both Toc H members, and it was a totally equal relationship'.

As the conversation ended, I said 'Some people, some clergy, accuse Toc H of being 'diluted Christianity'. How do you feel about that?' The answer was immediate: 'I would cross out the word diluted. I don't know what they mean. It is the practical application of Christian love at its very basic level.' A good point to end on.

Noticeboard

WORLD CHAIN OF LIGHT

The order of service for the World Chain of Light is available from Central Services, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, HP22 6BT or call 01296 623911.

NEWS ON TAPE

If you would like Point Three or the Friends of Talbot House newsletter on tape, please contact Angela Gregory at Central Services, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, HP22 6BT or 01296 623911.

CHECK YOUR INSURANCE

Anyone arranging projects, especially canal projects, remember to call our insurance brokers to check you are properly insured. Call Martin Richards at HCIS Ltd on 0121 2332722.

ROYAL CHARTER

A copy of TOC H's amended Royal Charter is available from TOC H Central Service, 1 Forest Close, Wendover, HP22 6BT. Email info@toch.org.uk Tel: 01296 623911.

POINT 3 DEADLINES

We need copy in by 15th November for the December issue, please. Material can be sent to Sue Coffey at Zymo Marketing and Public Relations, Business and Innovation Centre, Angel Way, Bradford BD7 1BX or emailed to info@zymo.co.uk